



## **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS to perform**

### **AGREED-UPON PROCEDURES on Osborn Barr(OB)**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

United Soybean Board's (USB) Audit & Evaluation committee is requesting proposals to perform agreed-upon procedures (AUPs) for USB's contractor, Osborn Barr (OB). USB is the industry-funded research and promotion board established by the Soybean Promotion Research and Consumer Information Act and the Soybean Promotion and Research Order & Rules and Regulations (Act & Order) and authorized by the Congress. USB is charged with investing resources to invest in four distinct areas: promotion, research, consumer education and industry information. The Act & Order and the USDA Guidelines for AMS Oversight of Commodity Research and Promotion Programs (AMS Guidelines) also specifically lay out the fiduciary responsibilities in administering checkoff funds.

#### **PURPOSE OF RFP AND SCOPE OF WORK**

The purpose of this project is to inspect expenditures and evaluate risk. The selected firm will perform specific agreed-upon procedures on work performed by OB on behalf of USB from October 2017 through September 2018 and perform a risk assessment of the internal control environment at OB.

The expenditure procedures focus on compliance of expenditures with the terms of the contract, expenditure guidelines, and policies and procedures. Specifically, a representative sample of project expenditures should be inspected for compliance with the following:

- Act & Order
- AMS Guidelines
- USB Vendor/Contractor Management and Reimbursement Policy
- Contract between USB and OB
- If applicable, contract between OB and subcontractor
- OB policies and procedures

In addition, another representative sample of OB fees for staff time and out-of-pocket expenditures should be inspected for compliance with applicable OB policies and procedures.

For the risk assessment of the internal control environment at OB, the firm is expected to define appropriate methodology in determining and reporting risk related to the findings, observations and recommendations. Based on risk assessment procedures, the risk map/report will provide a tool for the Directors of A&E to gain an understanding of what risk exists, to what extent and how and where risk can be reduced. Examples of risk map variables include but are not limited to; strategic management, project management, funding source management, delegation of authority, expense tracking, approvals, transaction classifications, contract specifications, staff continuity, internal audit/controls, etc.

## **INSTRUCTIONS**

**Proposal submission deadline**

**February 5, 2019**

**12:00 Noon CDT**

**To: Katherine Ayers, USB CFO at [kayers@unitedsoybean.org](mailto:kayers@unitedsoybean.org)**

Proposals should include the specific criteria below, at a minimum.

1. An outline of the methodology to be used, including firm's approach to risk assessment.
2. A detailed plan of work, including a timeline for all milestones and deliverables associated with the plan of work.
3. Background information about the firm and detail firm's experience in providing Agreed-Upon Procedures to companies in the not-for-profit sector.
4. Provide information on whether the firm has provided AUP services to any related industry/agricultural associations or groups.
5. Detail the firm's experience working with clients to assess and report risk.
6. Identify the Partner, Manager and in-charge accountant staff who will lead and/or be assigned to undertake each component of the project and provide biographies for each.
7. A detailed budget for the services to complete the scope of work including all deliverables.

## **Timeline**

NOTE: The following timeline is a guide.

01/2019	RFP issued
02/05/2019	Deadline for submission of proposals (12:00 Noon CST)
02/19/2019	A&E reviews proposals for Firm selection
03/15/2019	Upon execution of contract with USB, field work can begin
08/2019	Draft report submitted to USB staff and OB
09/2019	OB response submitted to Firm and USB
10/2019	Final report issued
11/2019	Presentation to A&E Committee

## **Engagement Information**

Firm will be required to become familiar with relevant USB and USDA policies and adhere to the requirements of the *Soybean Promotion, Research and Consumer Information Act & Order* and other related government mandates for checkoff programs which govern USB.

## **Additional Information and Questions**

USB will be providing general background information about this request for proposal in a conference call on Friday, January 18, 2019 at 9:00 a.m. CST. If interested in submitting a proposal, please contact Katherine Ayers, USB CFO, at [kayers@unitedsoybean.org](mailto:kayers@unitedsoybean.org) regarding questions or for information to participate in the call.

## **Organizational Background**

The United Soybean Board, created by the 1990 Farm Bill to manage and direct the National Soybean Checkoff, is dedicated to marketing and research for the U.S. soybean industry. USB is comprised of 73 volunteer soybean farmers representing the interests of fellow growers nationwide. Each board member is nominated by a Qualified State Soybean Board (QSSB) and appointed by the United States Secretary of Agriculture.

For additional information, you can access USB's website at [www.unitedsoybean.org](http://www.unitedsoybean.org).

Oversight of USB is provided by the Secretary of Agriculture through the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS). The

authority for the checkoff is the Congressional Act, Soybean Promotion, Research, and Consumer Information Act (Act). The criterion by which USDA administers USB is outlined in the Soybean Promotion, Research Order & Rules and Regulations (Order). Both documents can be accessed through the USB website through the provided links. The Act and Order contain certain constraints under which the soy checkoff program must operate, specifically restricting the use of checkoff funds for lobbying the United States government.